

Moran Meets Again with Japanese Ambassador

Continues Work to Re-open Borders to American Beef

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Jerry Moran and the House Agriculture Committee today met with Japanese Ambassador Ryozi Kato to discuss opening the Japanese markets to U.S. beef. This meeting is the second time that Moran has met with Ambassador Kato.

"I was disappointed that Ambassador Kato could not provide a timeline for resuming imports of U.S. beef," Moran said. "President Bush and Prime Minister Koizumi discussed this issue on March 9, and at that time, the prime minister said he would make efforts to ensure that this issue does not negatively affect the relations between Japan and the United States. Secretary Rice again pressed the issue with Japanese officials during her visit to Japan on March 19. However, despite these assurances, the markets remain closed."

On March 3, Moran introduced a resolution calling for immediate retaliatory economic sanctions to be used against Japan if it fails to abide by its agreement to reopen its border. The agreement was reached with U.S. trade negotiators on October 23, 2004. Since Japan closed its markets to U.S. beef in December 2003, the U.S. has lost an estimated \$2 billion in sales.

The Japanese markets have been closed since the U.S. discovered a single case of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), in a Canadian dairy cow. Since that time, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has aggressively implemented additional safety checks in the beef system to guarantee the safety of American beef. The result is that U.S. standards now exceed international beef safety standards.

"My patience with the Japanese government is wearing thin," Moran said. "Japanese government officials have no scientific evidence to keep their markets closed. I

will continue working with administration officials, congressional leaders and my colleagues to determine the next step in this ongoing battle. My number one priority is to guarantee that Kansas ranchers have access to international beef markets."

In 2003, the First Congressional District produced nearly five billion pounds of beef, making it the largest beef producing congressional district in the nation.

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